NAQCC News

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1. NOVEMBER CHALLENGE: First of all, Tom WY3H has now taken over all details of our challenges. If you can't find an answer to your question in the challenge rules or elsewhere on the club web site, contact him.

If it's November, it must be time for the Thanksgiving challenge. This is the sixth running of this popular challenge. It started way back in 2004 based on an idea by Tom, and was our very first challenge of any kind as well as the first alphabet challenge. Tom's idea of an alphabet challenge has grown to include several different varieties (some suggested by our club members) of that theme including the Groundhog Challenge coming up in February for one example.

As you should do for every challenge, sprint, and award, read and understand the rules completely before you do anything. Here in the newsletters we just give a brief synopsis of what's going on.

Full Challenge info here.

2. OCTOBER SPRINT RESULTS: There's a change coming in our sprints also. We are eliminating the Special Award certificate starting in January 2010. Instead we will issue a certificate to the MEMBER who submits the top overall score among first-time participants. That means someone who enters our sprint AND submits a log for the very first time since we started our sprints over 5 years ago. We have a record of everyone who ever participated here including call changes. That will determine who is a first-timer. Other than changing from a Special Award to a First-Timer certificate, all else will remain the same in our popular sprints.

Participation was up again for the second straight month with 59 logs received showing 107 participants in those logs. Both figures are not far below record numbers. That's both

surprising and pleasing considering the horrid propagation conditions in much of the country. I could only manage 26 QSO's here, my lowest total in quite a while now. Most of the 26 were tough to complete, and I think only my experience in over 925 contests over 46 years helped me to even make that many. Similar stories of the bad conditions are abundant in the soapbox comments. It's a real tribute to our members to have come up with the numbers we did this month.

Of course this was our 'anniversary sprint' in which we had participation from our 10 special event calls, N1A, N2A...N9A, N0A. Perhaps that added somewhat to the interest and helped produce the near-record numbers.

Here now are the full statistics for the September sprint.

STATS - current month, previous month, all time record, mo/yr (blue indicates a record set this month):

Logs -	**59**	**51**	**65**	**5/09 & 4/09**
Autologger logs -	**56**	**49**	**59**	**5/09**
Stns in logs -	**107**	**93**	**110**	**5/08**
Hour 1 QSO's -	**355**	**465**	**564**	**9/08**
Hour 2 QSO's -	**294**	**332**	**476**	**9/08**
Total QSO's -	**649**	**797**	**1040**	**9/08**
20M QSO's -	**6**	**19**	**209**	**6/09**
40M QSO's -	**247**	**506**	**720**	**5/09**
80M QSO's -	**396**	**272**	**481**	**12/07**

WINNERS:

1st SWA East - N8BB
1st SWA Central - K9FO
1st SWA Mountain - NO2D
1st SWA Pacific - NU7T
1st Gain - n/a
N#A - N5A (W5YDM)

Special Award (Most N#A QSO's)
Drawing Entrants: N6A, NU7T, K9FO, N4BP
Drawing Winner: NU7T

Congratulations to all including winners and non-winners. Actually everyone who participated and sent in a log is a winner because that shows the ham radio world that there are many folks still using and enjoying CW on the ham bands. That's one of our main goals here at the NAQCC.

Very special thanks to those who reported their results even though they made only a few QSO's. Your reports are important also.

We had a total of 8 stations who didn't submit a log show up 5-13 times in the 59 logs we received and cross-checked. Hopefully those 8 and many others will be back next month AND submit a log. Remember submitting a log doubles the strength of your statement that you support CW operation.

We welcome these hams who submitted a sprint log for the first time. We hope they will continue to participate and report their results:

N0A(WG0AT), AB9CA, N6A(W6AZ), N3RBN, VE3KQN, N9A(WA9KPZ)

Full sprint info here.

3. GENERAL CLUB NEWS:

- Our 5th anniversary celebration during the week of October 12-18 was a resounding success despite a week of very poor propagation conditions. With one op yet to check in with his totals, 830 QSO's were made. Multiplying that by 4 to project a full month to compare with our previous full month celebrations makes 3,320 QSO's which is almost double our previous high total.

It seems that three factors helped us out this year to counter the poor propagation. Limiting the operation to just one week instead of a full month concentrated interest in the event, and kept it from dragging as it did at times in previous years. The elimination of the confusing N3A/# calls and replacing them with N1A, N2A....N9A, N0A was appreciated by both our ops and those who worked them. We thank the Adventure Radio Society for doing something similar a few years ago. We always like to give credit if we use someone else's idea for one of our activities. Finally a more detailed schedule of operations on the web site in an easier to read and understand format made searching for our stations on-air much easier with less wasted listening time.

Getting back to some stats. Our 830 QSO's included contacts from 45 states. The missing ones? DE, HI, MS, SD, WY. DX countries worked included W and VE (of course), 9A, F, GM, EA, EI, UR, HA, KL7, VP2V, UA1, DL, FO0M, KH4, KP4, JA. That's a total of 17 which is not bad for a sunspot minimum using QRP and in most cases, simple wire antennas during a very bad week of propagation conditions. There were QSO's from 6 Canadian provinces, AB, BC, NB, NS, ON, QC. A total of 56 2XN#A QSO's were made.

PA appeared in logs from 20 of our ops. Other often appearing states were NY 17, TX 16, MI 15, AR 14, IL 14, MN 14, NJ 13, OH 13, GA 12.

I've asked all our ops to submit their comments on the operation from their standpoint. Those reports are in the Member News section below.

- We are in the process of handing over managing of our prizes to our new prize manager KC2EGL. Mike will be handling all the details of our prizes from now on. During the transition we missed a couple details and would like to point them out here for those of you who don't regularly check the prizes page on the web site or read the newsletters thoroughly.

There is a handsome prize connected with our anniversary celebration and the October challenge involving the celebration. Although it wasn't listed on the challenge rules until after the celebration, it was mentioned in the newsletter and hc01 on the prizes page well in advance of the celebration. This is why we urge our members to read the newsletters thoroughly.

The prize is a beautiful 'CW Lamp' with a key and vacuum tube mounted on the base. It was designed and crafted by one of our very skilled members, Bill W0EJ. A picture is on the prizes page along with rules on how you can be the lucky winner. We have also now added the info to the October challenge page.

- While you're looking at the Prizes page, check out the other prizes as well. The NAQCC

appreciates the loyalty of our members, and we believe in rewarding that loyalty with some small gifts from time to time.

- We are changing the way we archive our past newsletters to save space on the Usatek server where the NAQCC web site is hosted. From now on, past newletters can be accessed in .pdf format from K3WWP's SkyDrive 25GB web site. See the Newsletter Past Issues page for more info.

- Still more club changes. We're changing our distribution method for our newsletter posting announcement emails. We've started up a mail list on QTH.net. It is NOT a reflector where anyone can post. It is only for postings by selected club officers for the purpose of distributing important club news of an urgent nature that can't wait for the next newsletter to be published. It also as mentioned will serve as a way to distribute our newsletter posting announcements twice monthly.

We will be adding everyone to the list who fits the following description:

Everyone who has a current good email address that has not been bouncing.
AND
Has NOT unsubscribed from the previous email distribution system.

You will be receiving a welcoming email from the QTH.net maillist we've called [NAQCC-News] sometime during November. Please watch for it. It will be your assurance you have been subscribed. It also will contain a password that you must keep if you wish to update your subscription or want to unsubscribe. If you have not received that welcome email by December 1st and wish to be subscribed to the new list, email
NAQCC33@WINDSTREAM.NET with the exact following format:

Subject: Subscribe (your call) without the parentheses, e.g. in my case:

Subscribe K3WWP

Body of the email on 4 separate lines:
(your on-air name) without the parentheses
(your call) without the parentheses
(your email address) without the parentheses
(your 4 digit NAQCC number) without the parentheses

That is in my case:

John
K3WWP
johnshan@windstream.net
0002

Anything that deviates in any way from the exact format above will be discarded automatically with no action of any kind taken.

- We're continuing with the hidden call sign idea suggested by Bill KB3XS. You should know the routine by now. Somewhere in this newsletter is a call sign of a member in a place that is definitely out of context and containing a mix of upper and lower case letters. If it is YOUR call sign and YOU find it, email us BEFORE the publication date of the next newsletter (November 14) and win 100 NAQCC QSL cards donated by the NAQCC. A call sign is only used once whether the ham finds it or not. Good luck. No use using your browser's search feature to find

it. That won't work.

4. ELMER PROJECT: Report from N3IJR: Well the Summer is gone and Fall band conditions are here. I would like to give you all a report on the QRS net on Sundays but the band has been so bad and check In's have really dropped off. So with that in mind I would like to give 80 meters a go in November. I hope that the net is something you all are interested in and I am willing to give it the time if we get some check In's. I recently read about the 4 States QRP club there web site is www.4sqrp.com you can check it out. They have a number of nets and I wish that we could get one going. I think that the net can do two things, first, its good cw practice. Second, It is a good way to get to know each other. With all of that said, lets try 3.595 mhz on Sunday November 1, at 8:30 pm est (Monday at 0130Z). I will make it very simple to check in. I will call NAQCC QRS net de N3AQC (the club call) then I will send K, just come back to me with your call and I will ask for signal report and give me your name. Then I will ask you to stand by (AS) and look for more check In's. Please don't go away,that has been a problem with the net. I want us to chat a little, I will come back to you in the order that I took the check In's. Oh, I almost forgot, at the end of the net on Sundays I will be giving a mystery word, I will send MW MW then the word twice. I will do this before I sign off of the net. If you can email me 4 of the words I will send you a gift.

To date we have only had one request for help and I am sad to say that the Elmer I gave him has not responded to him, but I will be working with him as much as I can. One of the things that our student is doing, and I suggest it, is that he is using the ARRL web site and downloading the cw they have in their archives into his mp3 player. I have done this and it works great! I have downloaded 30 wpm to challenge myself and I just copy in my head. If I don't get all the words so what, in time you would be surprised how much you do get.

I would like to also add a portion from The Art and Skill of Radio Telegraphy by N0HFF each time we talk about the Elmer Project. I do feel this is the Bible of Morse Code. If you don't have a copy get one. It has to be one of the best resources on Morse Code I have ever read and continue to read. On sending CW, "Rule #1, Never send faster than you can send accurately. Rule #2, Never send faster than you can receive properly." I feel that these two rules are being broken by many of us. We need to stick to the basics, it really makes for better QSO's.

Remember my email is pix_email_n3ijr (1K) . I would like to hear from you with any suggestions or help, after all we are all in this thing together. 73 fer nw Karl/N3IJR .

As Karl said above, we need more help with the Elmer project on both ends. Those who can help others and those who need help. If you are interested in helping out or need help with any CW and/or QRP matters contact:
K5DUZ - **NAQCCSKED@FLASH.NET**
N3IJR - pix_email_n3ijr (1K)

Also see Elmer Project on the web site.

5. AWARD WINNERS THE PAST TWO MONTHS:

CERTIFICATES:
1000 MPW:
0066 - N8ZYA
0067 - JJ1BDX
0068 - N5RDN

Alphabet Prefix:
USA: #0010 - VE3HUR

WAC:
#0011 - K1YAN

WAS:
#0011 - VE3HUR

Worked Members:
Basic:
#0001 - K3WWP

ENDORSEMENTS and/or WEB SITE LISTINGS:
Suffix Words Honor Roll:
NU7T - 100 - SWA/GAIN

WAC:
K1YAN - 30M

Worked Members:
Basic:
K3WWP - 500

Remember our incentive to work towards and earn our NAQCC awards thanks to Gregg WB8LZG. Gregg has donated a set of beautiful knob inserts for the K1 and K2 rigs. The Prizes page in the main section of the web site has more info and a picture. You can win one by earning and applying for any TWO of the following NAQCC awards. It's first come, first served, so make haste.

QSO-A-DAY
30-30
Alphabet Prefix
Worked Members - Advanced
Suffix Words

Check the 'Current' page in the 'Awards' section of the web site for rules for these awards.

Only new applicants on or after October 1, 2008 are eligible.

Full List of all award winners here.

6. NEWS ITEMS AND ARTICLES BY OUR MEMBERS: This section is a forum for you to tell other members what you've been up to on the ham bands or to submit an article dealing with some aspect of CW and QRP operation or equipment. Send your news items and articles to our news editor Paul KD2MX at **KD2MX@ARRL.NET**. Deadline for submitting news items for the next newsletter is Nov 13. For your convenience any links in this section will open in a new browser window so you can come immediately back here to the newsletter just by closing that extra window.

DISCLAIMER: Any views expressed in this section are those of the member submitting them,

and may or may not be those of the NAQCC or its officers.

In this issue we are presenting items from our N#A ops about their experiences during anniversary week in addition to regular news items at the end of the list.

- **From Mike KC2EGL #1236 (N3A) -** On Columbus Day 12 October 2009, John K3WWP and myself Mike KC2EGL had scheduled a three hour time slot for operating N3A portable for the fifth anniversary celebration of the NAQCC. We set out from John's house to set up at the Kittanning Community Park. Upon arrival we set up two operating positions under a picnic pavilion. John's set up consisted of my Elecraft KX-1 fed to a Super Antenna. I need to acquire a much longer length of coax to use with the Super Antenna. All I had was a six foot length which was not long enough for a comfortable operating set up. My set up consisted of my Elecraft K-2 (CW QRP only) fed to MFJ's version of a Ham stick attached to a magnetic mount which was set up on a cookie sheet. The Mag mount has fifteen feet of feed line. I placed the antenna as far from my position as possible on the ground. We had what I would call a true field set up. John used his home brew straight key. I used my Dewey Magnetic Camel back home brew straight key. We ran our pre-operation testing by making sure everything would tune up properly. I gave John the choice of which rig he wanted to use. He wanted to operate my KX-1 because he was familiar with it. He assisted me in the construction of it, plus he christened it for a week or so after the completion of construction.

We started out at 1600Z (12 Noon EDT) and planned on operating for three hours. John operated on 40M and I operated on 20M. Things started out well. Both of us worked Tom WY3H. Both of us kept up a good pace calling CQ N3A. I made three QSO's and John made four QSO's by the middle of our time slot. Unfortunately we had to cut our time short due to Mother Nature. She turned up the wind machine which gave us some nasty wind chills. We found that trying to operate CW without gloves in chilly weather causes you to add on a few extra dits here and there.

(Here's Mike intently listening for an answer to his CQ - K3WWP)

Over all it was a great experience. Getting together with John for any kind of project is always

fun. We will try this again next year. The only changes I will make is to bring some longer feed line and a table to set the Super Antenna on. This will get it out from under the pavilion.

Thanks to all who answered our CQ. See you next time on the radio.

- **From John K3WWP #0002 (N3A) -** Yes, it is always fun for me also when Mike and I get involved in a project. I only wish we had been able to operate the full 3 hours at the park.

I think you can tell from my hair and the curled up log page how windy it was

Had we been able to stay, we would have been surprised by Bob W3BBO (#1001) who drove down from Erie supposedly to surprise us at our operating position. As it turned out, although not at our operating position, he did surprise us.

When Mike and I got home and picked up a pizza, we took my neighbor's dog Joe (those who read the diary on my web site know all about Joe) for a walk while waiting for the pizza to cool a bit. As we were walking, a car pulls up and the driver says, "Get a real dog." It was Bob, so we did get a chance to visit with him back at my house when we finished Joe's walk. Bob often comes down to the Butler hamfests, but this was our first eyeball QSO at my shack, and the first time Bob and Mike met in person. When Bob left, he drove up to the Community Park to check it out and he made a QSO with me from there with his portable rig.

So that was a pleasant addition to our portable operation.

Overall, I didn't get all that much time to operate N3A. Only a few hours during the week and a few more in the QRP ARCI contest. I was disappointed in not making a sweep of all 10 SE calls, but conditions and lack of air time prevented that. So there was nothing much I could do about it. I did work 8 calls though. I missed N6A and N7A. I never even heard either one. Thanks to Ron W6AZ for his efforts in trying to give me N6A though. See next item.

- **From Ron W6AZ #0026 (N6A) -** I'm sorry you (K3WWP) weren't able to get your sweep!! Both Saturday & Sunday, every time I worked or heard PA I immediately switched to CQing

nearby, as I knew there was at least some kind of path to PA at the time. But I never heard you with either your call or N3A. On Saturday I worked K3WW at 1604z. Hey, just one letter short of working you! Later at 1813z N3LAZ answered my CQ. On Sunday at 1546z W3TS answered my CQ. So those are the PA stations I worked.

On Sunday I heard the PA stations I had worked several times, and switched to CQing when I heard them. I heard K3WW calling CQ at 1530z, but weak, and then again at 1554z & 2107z, both times 559. At 1631z I heard N3LAZ calling CQ, also 559.

I actually heard very little from the northeast. I did hear stations in the NY QSO Party, but didn't try to work any of them. The only other I heard was NH, which I did work. Mostly it was the midwest to the west for me.

BTW all the above was on 20m.

One interesting observation. Of my 38 Q's in the ARCI contest, exactly half also had an NAQCC number. (That's great - K3WWP)

As things petered out in the ARCI contest, I moved down 20m to work some DX. The first was Marquesas (TX5SPM) which I worked as W6AZ, but then worked again ten minutes later as N6A. I worked VP2V/KG9N on Tortola NA 023, British Virgin Islands using N6A, thinking I probably already had it as W6AZ. Sunday morning there was a good opening to Europe and the WAG contest. During that opening I worked UA3XGM near Moscow and DL5AWI, both as N6A, and both 1000 mpw Q's. Europe is very tough to work from here, especially as QRP. During the opening I copied six or more DL's sending CQ, but was only able to snag DL5AWI. Not long after I worked him, the opening slammed shut like an iron gate and I didn't hear a peep out of Europe again. Of course the K4M expedition was going strong during the whole weekend. I heard them loud on 20m, so I knew the path was there. It took me four or five calls and at 2227z I got him! Of course I had done that as W6AZ. But the path was still good, so how hard could it be to work him again as N6A? It took me another 16 minutes and then I snagged him as N6A at 2243z. I also worked KL5O (that's a letter O) which is also a special event call, celebrating 50 years of Alaska, so it kind of becomes a pun on 50.

I suppose you've run into the disadvantage of a 1x1 call, which is the other station thinking they didn't get all of your call yet. (Yes, but it was MUCH better overall this year than last when we used N3A/#. The unique calls for each call area helped a lot. Admittedly many hams in the dumbed down era of ham radio don't know about special event 1x1 calls. - K3WWP) I ran into that with W0PQ in the ARCI contest. I think it took 10-15 minutes to work him, as he kept asking for repeats of my call, saying he had QSB and so on. I knew he just wasn't believing his ears. I sent N6A N6A N6A N6A and then other times I sent N 6 A N 6 A and so on. Then I sent N6A/W6AZ which I thought would clear up matters. But then he thought I was N6AZ! I couldn't think of a simple way to explain. I said 3 letters, special call, etc. I wish I had thought to send 1x1. That might have done the trick. He was in Nebraska, a pretty rare state, so I didn't want to just give up and walk away. Finally he got it and asked if it was N6A and I sent R R R R R R R. QSO complete. Whew!

But the pro at K4M handled it beautifully without missing a beat. First, he believed his ears when he heard N6A, but he sent N6A? to make sure he didn't miss a part. I came back with N6A RRR and he responded with N6A CFM? And all I had to do was send RR CFM. We exchanged 599's and it was done. All in about 15 sec at 24 wpm, as opposed to 15 mins with Nebraska!

I wish I had had time to do more, but the 10/15 tax deadline was intense. I'll definitely be interested in doing it again next year. I hope we did a WAS as a group.

You know, when I first wrote to you about N6A I had not been on the air in a long time, because of my work (3 jobs) and caring for my 93 year old father. But I decided to accept the challenge as a way to get myself going on the air again. And it really worked. So I thank you for that!

- **From Keith KB8FE #1542 (N8A) -** John one comment I have is that the 'blurb' we should send informing the contact what the N#A call sign is associated with (special event, anniversary, web searching suggestion, etc.) consumes quite a bit of time. I was concerned that a 'weak contact' would probably not copy all of it thus leading to confusion or to a request for a 'repeat'. And if the other operator was S-L-O-W S-P-E-E-D it was literally torture to have to send all of that information. Unfortunately I do not have a good answer. I assumed the slow guys were some of the right guys to tell about our QRP club. Anyway a couple of guys said they were going to look into it. (Since our event was not a contest, the QSO rate didn't matter at all. What was important was getting publicity for the club and recruiting new members also. So you did a fine job, as did all our ops in that regard. - K3WWP)

On another note, I made a small version of a 'balanced-balanced antenna tuner' and using 450 ohm window wire to a 40 meter dipole at 55 feet. I was getting very good signal reports (better than expected). I like this transmatch as it seems 'well behaved'. I have 50 ohm coax from the transceiver to a 1:1 balun then through the two air core coils (with tap points) and then the variable capacitor across the window wire connections. I just threw together another on (a more robust version) for my 80 meter inverted Vee. Most notably I was receiving a 599 report from every single contest station I worked. [tongue in cheek]

- **From Tom KA2KGP #0555 (N2A) -** I just finished up with my N2A operations, had fun all week & met lots of new operators. Sometimes the band-gods were cruel, and 40 m. RTTY & ARCI Contest QRM was heavy here in WNY. Rig: Icom 7000 at 5 w. into either a 5 band vertical or a 5 band dipole up 25 feet. Straight key used after contact, keyer used for calling CQ. I hope I can do this again sometime down the road. CUL

- **From Mike N2COD #0554 (N2A) -** Tom (KA2KGP) & I had a blast operating as N2A this week. We tried to promote the NAQCC organization in our QSO's & tried to have a "rag-chew" chat as opposed to a contest QSO format. Rig: Yaesu FT-857d at 5w. into 9' mobile whip w/ tuner. Band conditions were terrible most of the week, with a few exceptions. Atmospheric QRN was much higher than normal & QRM from those nasty RTTY stations intruding into 40m. QRP space was sometimes unbearable. What is that continuous carrier at 7039.5? with an S8 signal that has been on constantly all week? I heard it in my mobile also in southwestern NY/northern PA, seemed to be louder in PA than here in WNY. Do u hear it in Kittanning? (Yes - K3WWP) Again, ... my brother Tom kicked my butt! Anyway, thankX for the opportunity to operate N2A. We can't wait until next years 6th Anniversary operations!

- **From John N8ZYA #2279 (N8A) -** I'm running a VERY modest station here (even for QRP standards) with an indoor antenna because I live in a "historic district" near the State Capitol. At 600 ft elevation, living between two 400 ft hills, and a tall apartment complex next door, I'm sure working me was a real challenge for just about everyone.

But despite the complications and the horrible band conditions, I was able to work stations every time I was on the air. (Two were in Canada and one was in France). It was FUN for me and especially interesting since I was a station that people wanted to hear and work.

I don't know how many members are aware of "fox hunting" but, to me, I was the fox being chased by hungry hounds.

The majority on my contacts were in the 300-700 mile range on 40 meters but 20 meters got me a contact with the N5A station in Texas. We must have been exactly the right distance because he was nearly 599 at one point in the QSO....unbelievable.

This was my first operation as a "special event station" and I look forward to next year.

- **From Geoff W1OH #0039 (N1A) -** Noon ops were a total dud. The Wednesday evening I had available was very slow - 3 contacts over about an hour and a quarter of CQing. Best results were in QRPARCI on Sunday, with 10 contacts over about an hour and a half Sunday morning on 80M, then a good run of 24 contacts in the last hour or so (2250z to 2359z) of Sunday, with 1 contact on 20m, 7 on 40m, and the rest (16) on 80m. Conditions during the times I had available were mediocre at best, except on 80m. Did get lots of CQ practice!! :-)

- **From John KQ1P #3113 (N1A) -** I enjoyed the NAQCC anniversary event even though conditions were the poorest in my 30+ years of operating. Geoff (W1OH #39) and Gary (K1YAN #2365) were great to work with and my thanks to them are deserved. Sadly, I never even heard them on the air. In fact I worked very few other stations in New England during the week. However, making a contact under less than ideal conditions is one aspect of the QRP challenge that I like. As I looked through my log I saw many familiar calls and an equal number of new ones - thank you all. As you can tell by my number, I am a relative newcomer to NAQCC and being a member has added much to my enjoyment of ham radio and operating QRP.

- **From Bobby W5YDM #3295 (N5A) -** I operated N5A during five of the seven days of the special event on 40m and 20m between 1300 UTC and 1800 UTC. I was also on during the October Sprint and finished first with the highest score in the N#A division. Due to other committments, I did not operate the last two days. As N5A I worked a total of 79 stations in 31 states and four Canadian Provinces. I had one DX QSO with HA7UG in Hungary. He was running QRP also and the band held up well enough for us to have a nice QSO of several minutes.

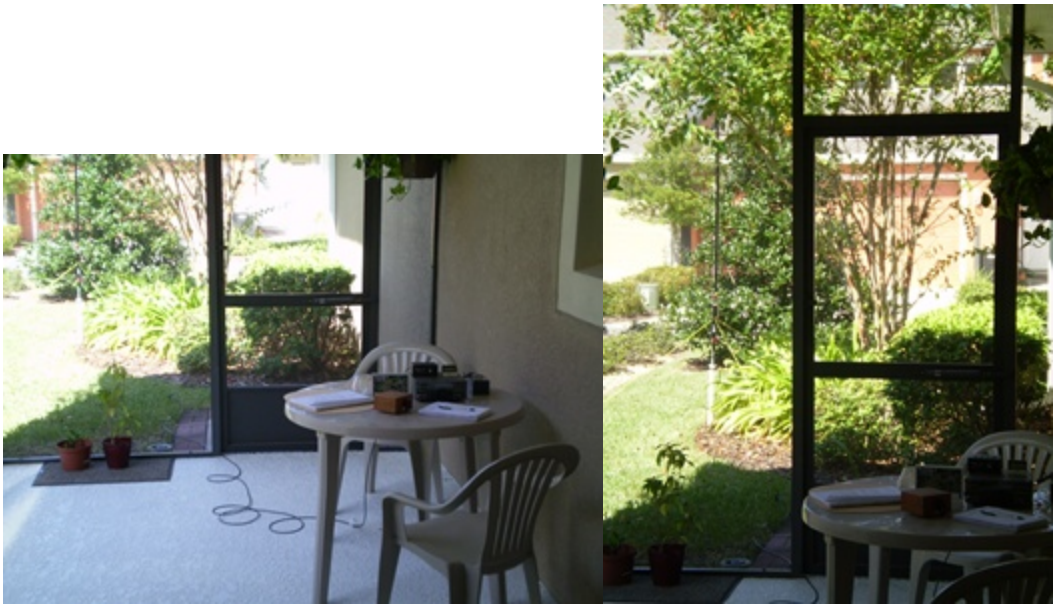
I had intended to video the entire sprint but didn't allow enough time to get set up. Later in the week, I did video the last three QSOs I had as N5A. My camera records in QuickTime(.mov), which is an Apple format, but I have no editing software on my laptop which runs Vista Home Premium. I wanted to edit the video down to short clips from each QSO and post them somewhere on the internet such as YouTube. If anybody knows how I can edit the video in Vista, please pass that info on to me and I'll make some short clips. Here's a photo of me operating as N5A.

- **From D.J. WA3ZBJ #1905 (N4A) -** Along with Lewis, KF4WK(#700), I had the pleasure of operating Special Event Callsign N4A for our recent 5th Anniversary and had a great time with it. From what I heard on the air, it sounded like our celebration was a resounding success.

"Someone" really had a good idea for the N#A stations. I'm sure I wasn't the only one who greatly enjoyed using that beautiful CW call sign. Since it showed just how terrible my own call is, maybe I enjoyed it a bit more than most. <grin> I wonder if I could work out a permanent trade?

From Florida I was able to make 46 N4A QSOs with 25 S/P/Cs. I operated at home while enjoying the air-conditioning (yes, this is Florida), portable on the Intracoastal Waterway, from the shore of the beautiful inland St. John's River, as well as close to the refrigerator on my back patio. My portable stations included my 2N240, K1, and K2. The antenna was an inverted vee supported by the fishing pole as shown in the picture below. I think we would all agree that propagation could have been a lot better during our anniversary week, but I think we all had a great time.

Here is the N4A back patio operations center for the NAQCC 5th Anniversary. Note the 20' Black Widow Crappie Pole antenna mast in the yard which supports my inverted vee.



- **From Paul N8XMS #0675 -** I was looking over the results for the October challenge and was struck by the small number of entries. There were certainly many more contacts with N#A stations. I wonder why people didn't bother to submit them for the challenge? I imagine this could be a little bit discouraging to you (the club officers). So let me offer my personal "thank you" to all of the club officers for all of the fine work that you do. I, for one, really enjoy the challenges and greatly appreciate all of the effort that goes into them.

- **From Will K9FO #1150 -** (Note from K3WWP: I worked Will on 80M and he mentioned this story about the certificate so I told him it would make a nice member news item. This is exactly the kind of stuff we like to see here)

Hi John, Thanks for the great QSO Tuesday night. I was using a McElroy Streamkey purchased in 1940 by Howie, W9NHM. He is now a SK. Here are a few comments on the certificate.

Thank you NAQCC for the nifty certificate for first in the October sprint in the central division SWA category.The sprint was October 14 and the certificate arrived October 26. That is FAST ACTION!

The next day I took it to a club luncheon and showed it off. I also explained about the NAQCC. Maybe we will get one or more new members. The luncheon is a weekly event of the Chiburban Radio Mobileers, a great club specializing in 160 meters. Take a look at the club website for a few laughs and info. Just Google (or Bing) Mobileers.

Thanks again for the certificate, and see you in the operating events. 73/72, Will

- **From Jim K9JWV #1974 -** On November 14, Stu, KI6J(#3772) and I are planning a hike to the top of Teutonia Peak to activate that summit for a new program here in the U.S. called Summits On The Air (SOTA). This mountain is just inside the California border as you head south on I-15 out of Nevada. SOTA activations are the latest "craze" in Europe and I liken its traction to the early stages of the IOTA program.

There will also be activations from summits or mountains in the following areas: VE2, W1, W2 and W6. Here's a link to the SOTA URL that is spreading the word about this upcoming event: www.sotawatch.org/reflector.php?topic=3787#30217/. Also check out Stu's web site www.sotausa.com/ and take a look around. You'll find info and links on various SOTA groups. The group for the W1 and W2 call areas is well established.

Stu and I plan to operate on the 40, 30, 20 and possibly 17 or 15 meter bands. The higher bands may not work out given how early we'll be there. It is difficult to plan the exact time that we'll be on the air but I expect we'll be up and running sometime between 1500Z and 1600Z. I plan on operating QRP CW on 7.03 to 7.04, 10.116 to 10.120, 14.060 and 18.080 or so (plus or minus for finding a clear spot). I know the popular SOTA frequency for SSB on 20 meters is 14.32 but I don't know what is popular for 40 and 17.

I'll bring my ATS-3B and my Wilderness Sierra as well as my trusty portable homebrew vertical. Stu will bring an assortment of dipoles. He may also bring a QRO rig for SSB ops - I'm not certain that has been worked out - BUT I'll be QRP with my ARS-3B for SURE!

- **From Keith KB8FE #1542 -** This information might be of interest. The HAARP waterfall display http://maestro.haarp.alaska.edu/data/spectrum2/www/hf.html/ can tell us at a glance what conditions were like above Alaska at the UTC times listed. Originally I assumed this was displaying current information above Ohio at the UTC times on the x axis. HAARP points out that if the antenna used was located in Ohio then the area above Ohio would have different 'signal strength return' values because it would be located at a lower latitude. To clarify my understanding, I wrote the following email to HAARP:

I am an Amateur Radio Operator and have recently been looking at the Spectrum Monitor Waterfall Chart. It occurred to me that I might be interpreting the waterfall incorrectly in terms of the conditions above the Eastern time zone(EST).

I look at the waterfall and observe that the right hand edge of the X axis is labeled 1800 UTC (this would mean 1400 EST in my area, or 2:00 PM local time). Does this mean that the conditions shown above that X axis value (above the '18' value) are the conditions occurring above Alaska at that point in time and NOT over the EST area (my time zone)?

If so, then that data would be three to four hours late for me. Am I right in this assumption? I assume the antenna used to obtain the waterfall data is located in Alaska. Could you please clarify this for me?

This is the explanation from HAARP as how to correctly interpret the display and the UTC time (x axis value):

"The Spectrum Monitor chart is updated in real time. The right hand edge is the current time, plotted as UTC to avoid confusion - but UTC versus EDT versus whatever, is always confusing, no matter how you present it."

"Keep in mind, though, that when you look at the chart, the ionospheric conditions being plotted are those that are observed by the spectrum monitor (whose antenna is at the HAARP site in Alaska). So even though the right hand edge of the chart is real time, it is for the geographic location of Gakona, Alaska."

"As an example, let's say you look at the spectrum monitor at 1100 EDT. That would be 1500 UTC. It would also be 0700 Alaska Daylight Time. The spectrum monitor right hand edge time would be reading 1500 (UTC). At 0700 ADT, however, the sun would not yet have risen in Gakona. The ionosphere over Gakona will still be under-ionized and propagation conditions for HF signals will be poor, especially at this point of the sunspot cycle. Therefore, you would probably not see many signals plotted on the chart. The ionosphere over the eastern USA, however, would be more highly ionized at 1500 UTC since the sun would have been up for a while and since the eastern USA is at a lower latitude than Alaska, so a similar waterfall chart for an antenna (located in Akron, for example) would be showing a larger number and stronger signals."

To summarize their response, the waterfall shows conditions directly above Alaska at the UTC times displayed at the bottom of the screen. Conditions directly above the EST region (East coast) are not shown on the display. EST is three to four hours ahead (to the right) of the actual color area of the display. Thus the display is essentially 'three or four hours late' for hams in the EST zone (four hours late according to the response from HAARP). However, notice that the 'trend' compared to the previous XX hours can be seen on the chart and thus we can assume that 'now' might be similar to 'then' (24 hours ago). If we see things picking up over Alaska then they have likely already picked up over Ohio, similar to the previous period 24 hours ago. The same 'time lag' would also pertain to declining conditions.

- **From John KM6MM #2879 -** Here I am again to tell a story of QRP operation while helping out our club members with a balloon launch at the Piney Campground outside of Dover Tennessee. As luck would have it Lewis, KF4WK(#700) and Doc, NV4T(#3805) came along with me to the camp. The weather was a little windy but we had high hopes of a clear, calm day for the Saturday event. Piney Campground is a regular stop for QRPers as it is very ham radio friendly. Camp hosts Al, K4RRO and his wife are ham radio operators. Al had mentioned that he needed help setting up his new station to work RTTY, PSK 31 and Slow Scan TV. So after we set up camp , Doc and I went over and helped Al with the programs that he needed to get on the air. Lewis stayed behind to check out the digital modes on his K3.

When Doc and I got back to camp, Lewis was sending what appeared to be CW with his K3 but the K3 was converting the CW to RTTY. Wow what a radio! It also converts to almost any other digital mode using input from a CW paddle. We sat down beside Lewis and began to give him a bad time about using digital instead of CW so he changed the radio back to CW. Our antenna was a wire dipole cut for 40 meters CW but we decided to give it a try on 30 meters. There we heard KB4JR calling CQ. Not being shy when it comes to a good QSO, Doc got on and called him back. KB4JR was in Lake Wales, Florida and was a solid 599. His report to us was also a 599. He was running 100 watts and was pleased with our 5 watt signal. Then Doc tuned around and found KU3X(#842), Barry in Bethlehem, PA. Barry was also a solid 599. He was running his ICOM 703 at 5 watts. QRP sure is fun. Barry said he has video on YouTube with him working CW so if you get a chance look him up. Now Doc got up and let me give it a try. I tuned around and found W3STW, Al calling CQ. I gave him a call and he came right back. His signal was 599 and he gave us a report of 549. Al is located in Warminster, PA. and was running 100 watts. Al's signal began to fade. I started looking around the camp site

and noticed it was getting so dark. I signed with Al and told Lewis it was time to pack it up for the night as I was becoming dinner for the flying critters that frequent camp sites.

The next morning we were having coffee and talking about radio and signals caught and missed. With a little time on our hands before the balloon launch, we broke out the K3 and took a spin around the 40 meter band. NO9T, Jim was calling CQ from Chicago, IL. With his strong signal I could not pass up a quick QSO. Our signal was 579 and he said we were doing a great job with our 5 watts. We filled him in about the balloon activity and he wished us all the best with our adventure. With that last QSO in the book we broke down the rig and antenna and were off for more fun with the club.

The publication of our next newsletter will be announced via email to all members for whom we have a valid email address unless you specifically have unsubscribed from the email.

Past on-line newsletters beginning with issue #042 are now archived on the site. So if you missed seeing any past issues, you can check them out in the archives.

Unless otherwise credited, all items are written by K3WWP.

If you came directly to this newsletter, we invite you now to browse the NAQCC Web Site.